

Planning and Transportation Commission Visit to the Bus Station 10 February 2010

Present: Councillor Chris Poulter, Harwood, Lowe and Rawson

Officers: Tony Gascoigne, Chris Hegarty, David Dowbenko, Malcolm Amatt, John Evans and Rob Davison.

1. Members and officers met at the Council House reception and proceeded to the Bus Station site. The ground floor was toured followed by the first floor administrative areas. Attendees then returned to the Council House for a round table discussion.
2. Initial and longer term staffing was discussed. £20k Smarter Choices funding will be used towards the public information about the changes. 100,000 leaflets will be produced explaining which stands in, or outside, the bus station services will be using after the opening. Updated information will be available on the Council's website. The plan has been to distribute the leaflets on buses and in the city centre in the week prior to the opening. Officers believed that providing information too early is liable to be forgotten so not effectively prepare the public for the changeover. Members **requested** that there needed to be staged information about the changes. The first information should appear at current service bus stop as soon as the bays are allocated so passengers begin to become aware of future locations.
3. There will be 29 bays in total, 24 with direct access of the building for buses plus 5 outside bays for coaches. There will be capacity for a maximum of 140 departures per hour. A significant number of services will not be relocating to the bus station and will continue to start and finish journeys at street bus stops, though the location will alter in some cases. It was also **requested** that early notice of these changes be given.
4. Some services would not be using the bus station for a variety of reasons, in some cases because operators were concerned about the impact on punctuality. Officers were **requested** to note Members' particular concerns about the Royal Derby Hospital Service which is proposed to continue arriving / departing from the Spot. As well as for visitors and staff, this means that ill / mobility impaired outpatients and day case patients face a long journey from to /from the bus station for connecting services.
5. The bus station running costs will be about £400k pa approx, including the manager's salary. The charges to the bus operators were discussed. Coaches will be charged at £3 per visit. The charge per bus visit would be phased in:
 - 40 p for the first 6 months
 - 50 p for months 7 to 18 from the date of opening
 - 60 p thereafter
6. It will be several years since local residents have crossed the Morledge and the road layout will be unfamiliar. Visitors from further afield and coach

passengers transferring to local services will need to have directions to taxis and amenities. It was **requested** that very clear signage is provided for arriving passengers when leaving the Bus Station.

7. Connected to the last point officers are also **requested** to note Member concerns* about there being no taxi drop off / collection point at the bus station site. This means that arriving coach passengers who will often have considerable luggage and most likely want taxis for the final journey leg face the longest journey to the taxi ranks. The same applies in reverse for departing coach passengers. Generally it prevents the new bus station being an integrated transport hub. [*re-inforced subsequent to the meeting]

8. As was seen on the site visit, there is a large, almost cube-shaped retail area which will house a number of units but was presently unlet. This would be visually unappealing to passengers at the launch of the new bus station. It is **requested** that hoarding is put up to make the scene more attractive. Cityscape boarding could be moved and re-used and/or a school design competition.

9. Members felt important that passengers should be able to get a drink or snack from Day 1 and it was **requested** that some basic refreshment facilities, eg vending machines, are provided until one or more cafes take up sites in the retail area.

10. There was a discussion about the uneven and unattractive triangular area near the Morledge. Officers said this was an issue of dispute with the developer. The Council will make basic improvements. This also linked to the discussion on the provision of cycle racks and officers suggested that some could be sited on the triangle. Commission members were confident the Cabinet Member would ensure the total provision for cyclists would be adequate.

11. Members received the explanation as to why real time information will not be available when the bus station opens. While disappointing, it was understandable and a planned delay should offer longer term value-for-money.

12. It was explained that H&T officers maintain a list of requests for bus stops. The opening of the new bus station will free up 18 or 19 on-street shelters in the city centre. Members **requested** that these are quickly relocated to locations across the city based on i) length of time on the list and ii) volume of passengers.

13. Officers suggested that a further briefing could be provided in about one month's time, Members indicated they would welcome this. The Chair closed the meeting and thanked all involved for their participation.

RD
24/2/10